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External research and ONE ; also NIS "front" research?
3 September 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/INTELLIGENCE COORDINATION

SUBJECT: Assessment of [redacted] Research

REFERENCE: Your memorandum, same subject, dated 25 August.

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the [redacted] The following comments are based on our appraisal of
Studies [redacted] Vulnerability Studies [redacted] and the Communication
research. [redacted] They are generally applicable to this type of

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a. Current Use

Some Board Members have read parts of these studies. Several Staff Members have read parts. Those Staff Members covering Soviet affairs have read much of the studies and studied selected parts carefully. The use to which this study has been put is restricted to providing additional background information on the current situation, trends, and developments in the Soviet Bloc.

b. Influence on Operations

not particularly helpful
No part of these studies has directly influenced our operations, programs, or planning. Both studies are relevant to the series of estimates which we produce and revise on Soviet Bloc capabilities, intentions, strengths, weaknesses, and probable courses of action. The Vulnerabilities Studies are more relevant than are the Communications Studies; an assessment of vulnerability to political warfare is a factor which we have considered in estimating Soviet capability for waging political warfare and Soviet political strength.

c. Recommendation

We would not recommend that ONE funds be spent to produce such studies. We cannot say that CIA funds should not be spent. Whether it is profitable for CIA to spend money on such studies is a determination best made by research offices such as CRR and OSI.

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See also ONE subject
file on "Russia".

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1. In our opinion, the conduct of such research by an academic institution for government is of mutual benefit to the research institution and the government. The research institution benefits by having an opportunity to turn out projects of more than academic interest; the government benefits by having helpful if not essential work done which would not otherwise be undertaken. An additional benefit accrues in that people who work on these projects are better qualified to go into related government activities.

2. Whether government financing is in order is another question. There is no question in our minds that some projects should be financed by government. In this category would fall those important projects which would otherwise not be undertaken either because an outside institution had no funds for it or because the project could not be done as well within the government. The big question is what projects are important? It is a question which will never be fully answered.

2. As guides for the future, in our opinion, the distinction to make is between basic research and applied research. Basic research is better left to institutions outside government. Policy for financing this type is fundamentally a philosophical determination. Applied research is closer to filling our everyday needs. How good applied research is will eventually depend on the quality of basic research on which it rests. All of which is not particularly helpful to you but then it isn't a problem to be answered by CSC or even CIA, except in concert with other agencies of government.

2. As far as CSC is concerned, most of the projects which have been financed by government during the last two years have not been particularly helpful to anybody in the business of making estimates. The scope of projects was determined more by what the available researcher wanted to do and could do and less by what was needed. I believe this can be partially explained on the ground that few outside research activities can work on an "all source" basis.

3. Our immediate needs? Pretty much what they have been and will continue to be: Soviet estimates of US capabilities and intentions; an analysis of long-range indicators of Soviet sources of

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actions; relations between the USSR and its satellites and with China; an analysis of factors determining Soviet Bloc policy.

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[Redacted]
Acting Assistant Director
National Estimates

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